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16TH FINANCE COMMISSION SUBMITS REPORT TO MURMU

The 16th Finance Commission on Monday submitted its report on devolution of taxes between the Centre and states to the President. Members of the commission, led by chairman Dr Arvind Panagariya, handed over the report to President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The 16th Finance Commission was constituted on December 31, 2023, with a mandate to determine the formula for the states' share of central taxes and the grants-in-aid for five financial years from 2026–27

The trial in absentia is a farce orchestrated by a kangaroo court controlled by opponents — Sheikh Hasina
The conviction affirms a fundamental principle: no one, regardless of power, is above the law
Md Yunus, Interim adviser

Protesters outside Mujibur Rahman's home in Dhaka after the verdict | PTI

It's death for Hasina

Bangladesh seeks extradition of ex-PM from India after conviction

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

BANGLADESH's deposed PM Sheikh Hasina has been sentenced to death by the International Crimes Tribunal for crimes against humanity committed during last year's July Uprising, a student-led revolt that culminated in her ouster.

Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, now a fugitive, received the same sentence, while former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who turned approver was handed five years prison. The tribunal also ordered the confiscation of properties belonging to Hasina and Kamal.

The three-member bench, led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, began delivering the 453-page judgement shortly after noon amid sweeping security measures across Dhaka. Hasina, 78, was tried in her absence. She is living in exile in India. Prosecutors filed five counts against the trio including failure to prevent murder and sought the maximum punishment.

Hasina, represented by a lawyer, denied all charges and earlier dismissed the proceedings as a "foregone conclusion." Her son and adviser Sajeeb Wazed told news agency Reuters they would not appeal unless a democratically elected government took office with Awami League participation. The judgment is appealable in the Supreme Court, though Hasina's absence might complicate the legal process ahead.

In her first response to the sentence, Hasina dismissed the verdict and said the sentence exposes "murderous intent" of extremist elements within the interim government.

"The verdicts announced against me have been made by a rigged tribunal established and presided over by an unelected government with no democratic mandate. They are biased and politically motivated ... they reveal the brazen and murderous intent of extremist figures within the interim government to remove Bangladesh's last elected prime minister, and to nullify the Awami League as a political force," Hasina said in a statement.

Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry has requested that India hand over former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, describing her as a "fugitive accused".

India on Monday said it noted the verdict and that it will engage constructively with all stakeholders considering peace, democracy and stability in the neighbouring country. "As a close neighbour, India remains committed to the best interests of the people of Bangladesh, including in peace, democracy, inclusion and stability in that country," it said. P11

45 Indians killed in Saudi bus crash

BALAKRISHNA VV & JAYANTH JACOB @ Hyderabad/New Delhi

As many as 44 Umrah pilgrims from Hyderabad, including 18 from one family, and one from Karnataka were charred to death near Madinah in Saudi Arabia when a diesel tanker collided with the bus in which they were travelling, triggering a massive fire. A group of 54 pilgrims flew from Hyderabad to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia on November 9 and was to return on November 23.

Forty-six of them were on the bus and only one survived. Of the remaining eight, four chose to travel separately to Madinah, and the other four stayed in Makkah. The victims include 18 members of a family across three generations. Of the 18, nine were children. The accident happened at around 1.30 am near Mufrihat, about 25 km from Madinah.

The bus had stopped on the side of a road when an oil tanker rammed into it, resulting in an explosion and a fire that engulfed the bus, sources said. The one pilgrim who survived the crash is currently receiving treatment at a hospital.

The Consulate General of India in Jeddah has established a 24×7 emergency helpline (See box). Telangana Minority Welfare Minister Mohd Azharuddin met the families of the victims. "We are in constant touch with Saudi authorities and are extending all possible assistance to the families. Our priority is to help the relatives in every way," he said.

As the bodies were charred beyond recognition, the Saudi authorities are likely to conduct DNA tests. A team led by Azharuddin will fly to Saudi Arabia soon along with relatives of the victims.

The Telangana government has announced an ex-gratia payment of ₹5 lakh to the kin of the deceased.

The Consulate General of India in Jeddah said it is committed to ensuring the swift handling of the remains in accordance with the wishes of the families, who will have the option of repatriating the bodies of their loved ones or opting for burial there itself. P7

Syed Naseeruddin with family at Hyderabad airport. Eighteen of the family, including Naseeruddin, died in the accident | X

PM EXPRESSES GRIEF

Narendra Modi conveyed condolences to the families of the deceased. "My thoughts are with the families who have lost their loved ones. I pray for the swift recovery of all injured," he wrote

HELPLINE: 8002440003, 00966122614093, 00966126614276, 00966556122301

EXPRESS READ

Another Umar aide planned drone attacks

New Delhi: The conspirators of the Red Fort blast in Delhi were planning to weaponise drones with explosives and rockets, officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said on Monday, a day after arresting a key associate of alleged suicide bomber Dr Umar un Nabi. Jasir Bilal Wani aka Danish, a Kashmiri resident, was arrested from Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday | P12

Blackbuck deaths: Alert issued in Sept

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE death of 31 blackbucks at the Kittur Rani Chennamma Mini-zoo (KRCM) in Belagavi may have been prevented if the authorities concerned had paid heed to the first alert of a possible breakout of Hemorrhagic Septicemia (HS), said to be issued in September this year.

TNIE has reliably learnt that in September, the National Animal Disease Referral Expert System (NADRES), developed by ICAR-National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology & Disease Informatics (NIVEDI), Bengaluru, had reportedly predicted a possible outbreak of HS — a bacterial infection among livestock and wildlife — in Belagavi district based on several parameters including climate variables.

"NADRES-NIVEDI had issued a 'Vet Alert' to the State Animal Husbandry Department and all other stakeholders, including farmers and veterinarians, in September and repeated the advisory again this month," highly-placed sources on condition of anonymity told this newspaper. "HS could have been managed without fatalities if timely and appropriate precautions were taken. All forms of communication channels; from hard copies and soft copies to SMS are used to send early warning/advisories to all the stakeholders," said sources.

CONTINUED ON: P6

State to launch own affordable AI comp: Priyank

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

TO take computing to the grassroots and make it more affordable, IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge announced the launch of KEO — an AI-ready personal computer. Designed, developed, and assembled completely in Karnataka, KEO, which stands for Knowledge-driven, Economical and Open Source, is said to offer a full computing experience at an affordable price.

Without revealing the price or the design, Kharge said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will officially unveil the device, developed by the Department of Electronics, IT and BT, along with KEONICS (Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation Limited), at the Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS) that will be inaugurated on Tuesday.

Addressing reporters at the curtain-raiser of BTS here on Monday, Kharge boasted that no state government anywhere in the world had taken this kind of disruptive tech and said KEO is Karnataka's answer to bridge the digital divide. P2

India to source 10% of annual LPG imports from the US

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

AMID pressure from the US to fix the imbalance in bilateral trade, India's state-owned oil companies have finalised a one-year contract to import 2.2 million tonnes of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) from the US.

Announcing the contract on Monday, Union petroleum minister Hardeep Singh Puri said 10% of India's annual LPG imports in 2026 will be sourced from the US Gulf Coast. This is the first structured contract for US LPG in the Indian market.

The deal also comes at a time when India cut oil imports from Russia due to US sanctions on two largest Russian oil firms—Rosneft and Lukoil—which had been major suppliers to India.

"One of the largest and the world's fastest-growing LPG markets opens up to the United States. In our endeavour to provide secure and affordable supplies of LPG to the people of India, we have been diversifying our LPG sourcing," Puri said in a social media post.

India is one of the world's largest LPG consumers, primarily used for household cooking. With domestic production covering just 35% of demand, India relies on imports.

After the US imposed 50% tariffs on Indian goods, New Delhi diversified its crude oil purchases to West Asia and the US. In fact, India has substantially increased its energy imports from the US, including crude, LNG, and now LPG.

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*The Issue shall remain open for subscription on Working Days from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Indian Standard Time), during the period indicated above, except that the Issue may close on such earlier date or extended date as may be decided by the Board of directors or debenture issue committee of our Company, subject to relevant approvals (subject to a minimum period of two working days and a maximum period of 10 working days from the date of opening of this Issue). In the event of an early closure or extension of the Issue, our Company shall ensure that notice of such early closure or extension is given to the prospective investors through an advertisement in a national daily newspaper and a regional daily newspaper in Tamil Nadu where the registered office is located, with wide circulation on or before such earlier date or extended date of closure. Application Forms for the Issue will be accepted only from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Indian Standard Time) or such extended time as may be permitted by the Stock Exchange, on Working Days during the Issue Period. On the Issue Closing Date, Application Forms will be accepted only between 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and uploaded until 5:00 p.m. (Indian Standard Time) or such extended time as may be permitted by the Stock Exchange.

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